



### More Roads = More Traffic:

The need for Smart Growth in Greater Cincinnati and protection for a natural treasure

By: Becky McClatchey, Sierra Club

## Sierra Club

- Sierra Club is the oldest, largest, most influential grassroots environmental organization in the nation
- More than 750,000 of your friends and neighbors
- Our mission is:
  - To explore, enjoy, protect the wild places of the earth
  - Practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources
  - To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment

What Designation does the Little Miami River hold?



What it is a National Wild & Scenic River?

- The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was passed and signed into law in October 1968
- The Act declared "that certain selected rivers of the Nation ...that possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations."

### Some Background Info:

- The LMR was designated as Ohio's first state scenic river in 1969
- The first National designation came in 1973, when the section from Clifton to Foster was dedicated. At this time the lower section from Foster to the Ohio River was **REJECTED!**
- In response, citizens banded together to clean up the lower section of the river

- In January 1980 the lower section of the river was then re-evaluated and granted inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River system.



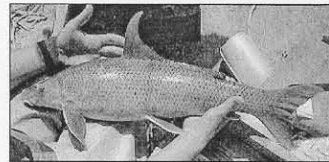
- The Little Miami River is 1 of only 3 National Wild & Scenic Rivers in the state

- The river is unique because it is the ONLY NW&SR that runs through an urban setting

- The Little Miami River is a 105 mile-long treasure winding through 5 southwest Ohio counties to the Ohio River

- The Ohio EPA has designated the LM as an "Exceptional Warmwater Habitat"

- Many state endangered fish and mussel species call the Little Miami home



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

(Blue Sucker)



(Orchard Oriole)

- The National Audubon Society has designated the Little Miami River as an Important Birding Area

- Two state endangered bird species migrate to the Horseshoe Bend area of the river



- Over 100,000 canoeist navigate the river's waters each year

- The LMR also attracts vast number of bikers and hikers

- After the LMR received its National designation, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources was charged with its protection

- On their website, the ODNR says the following about the river: "As development continues to grow it will become increasingly important to ensure that riparian corridors along the Little Miami and its tributaries are protected, for it is the forested river banks that remain the lifeline and basic ingredient necessary to protect this valuable state water resource. The value of the river and the rich living resources of the valley are counting on us for their protection."

## Threats to the Little Miami River

- Wastewater Treatment Plants along the LMR are plaguing the river with excess nutrients and pathogenic organisms

- The Center for Disease Control estimates that 8 M people contract waterborne illnesses each year from exposure to sewage: E.Coli, typhoid fever, hepatitis, gastroenteritis, dysentery and ear infections



DELT's: Deformities,  
Erosions, Lesions, Tumors



- **DELT'S** : lesions found on freshwater fish: low oxygen levels, surfactants, and endocrine disrupters are harming fish populations and other aquatic species

Need to monitor:

- Water Quality
- Habitat Quality
- Riparian Buffer Quality



(RIPARIAN BUFFER)

### Highways and Sprawl Hurt Us All:

- Years of bad transportation planning and investments have trapped us in our cars and polluted our environment
- Highways are #1 cause of sprawling development
- City of Cincinnati and Hamilton Co facing major losses in population



### Over-dependence on Highways:

Serious consequences on our health & safety

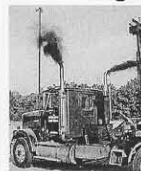
- From 1994-2000 in the seven-county Tri-state region, there were 475,074 car crashes, resulting in 1,102 deaths and 214,621 injuries
- Traffic congestion is not only dangerous; it also wastes our time, energy, and money
- The estimated cost of congestion in wasted fuel and time is \$505 million each year – that's enough to pay for a new downtown stadium each year!

ON AVERAGE, HOW MANY HOURS IN ONE YEAR DO PEOPLE SPEND IN THEIR CARS TRAVELING TO WORK?

- 24 HOURS
- 48.5 HOURS
- 63 HOURS
- 87.5 HOURS

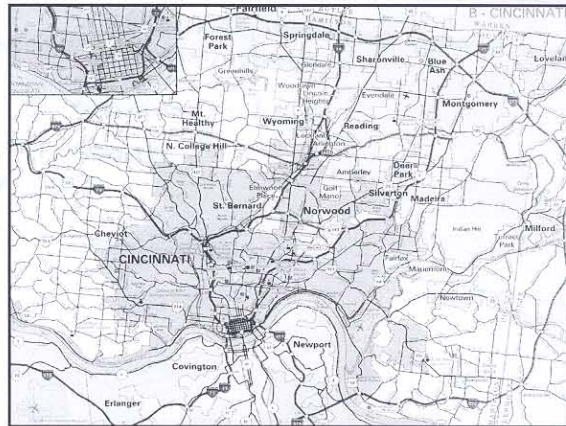


### Highway Health Hazards



- A significant body of scientific evidence is emerging that links pollution from motor vehicles to a range of human health problems including asthma, cancer, and heart disease
- The main cancer-causing pollutants from trucks and cars are diesel particulate matter and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's), such as benzene, 1,3 butadiene, formaldehyde, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH's).

## Highway Development: The Eastern Corridor Highway Project – A BAD IDEA!



A bridge over the Little Miami will degrade the river and its tributaries:

- Added water pollution: oil, salt, metals, brake dust
- Added air pollution: CO, CO<sub>2</sub>, SOX, NOX
- Added noise pollution: constant high and low frequency noises
- Added visual pollution: destruction of vital riparian habitat for bridge piers, lights lining highway/bridge
- Added soil pollution: land consumption, litter, debris, road kill

The Eastern Corridor Project will hinder the economic vitality of the region: Major problems with the cost/benefit analysis

- Lack of peer review lead to indefensible assumptions: Ex. Gas price used in analysis \$1.13
- No analysis of induced public sector costs: local streets, schools, sewers, and emergency services
- Improper estimation and assignment of benefits by region- Benefits to Cincinnati grossly overestimated
- No estimation of land use impacts or population shifts

### Problems with EC Cont.)

- No discussion of induced traffic demand
- Data used to estimate savings in drive time, vehicles miles traveled heavily flawed
- The Oasis Rail Line is a big loser: EC own analysis shows cost of \$580 M and benefit of \$24M

### THERE IS A BETTER WAY!

